

Budget and Transformation Panel

Friday 10 June 2011

Present:

Cllr D Hargey	SF (Chair)
Ald D Browne	UU
Cllr M Hendron	ALL
Cllr N Mallon	SDLP
Cllr J McVeigh	SF
Cllr R Newton	DUP

P McNaney	Chief Executive
R Cregan	Director of Finance and Resources
G Millar	Director of Property and Projects
S McNicholl	Planning and Policy Manager

Apologies: Cllr H Smyth PUP

1. Finance Update

R Cregan updated the Panel on the Council's financial position, including information on the status of departmental budgets, the capital programme, the local investment fund, the city investment strategy and the reserves position. The Panel approved the quarter 1 finance report for submission to the SP&R Committee.

The panel considered a proposal that non-recurrent unspent capital finance should be allocated to planned maintenance in areas such as parks and leisure centres. After discussion the panel agreed that further options for non-recurrent spend should be explored and it was agreed that officers should bring a report to SP&R Committee in September setting out options for non-recurrent spend of unspent capital finance, with proposals capable of being realised in the 2011/12 financial year. **Action: R Cregan and G Millar**

Members outlined that it would be helpful for R Cregan to provide Members with briefings on finance issues and the rate setting process. R Cregan agreed to set up specific briefings. **Action: R Cregan**

Arising from discussion of recent articles in the local press, it was agreed that the Head of Corporate Communications would be invited to the next Budget and Transformation Panel meeting to discuss ways in which Members can be effectively briefed to deal with any issues which arise. **Action: E Deeny**

2. Members' Planning Workshop

The Panel noted and agreed the agenda for the Members' planning workshop on 17th August.

3. LPS Update

The Panel noted that the LPS had informed the Council that after quarter 1 the forecast year end rates position is that the Council will need to pay back to LPS £161k. R Cregan informed the Panel that, as the rates income received by the Council is its key financial risk a suite of performance indicators have been established which will allow Members to hold LPS to account for its performance. Members noted that the performance indicators will be presented to the SP&R Committee in September and will provide the foundations for a discussion with LPS officials who will be attending SP&R in October.

4. Travel Publication Scheme

The Panel noted the information on the publication of employee travel costs which would be presented to the SP&R Committee on 19th August. The Panel noted the cost of travel had reduced by 30% between 2009/10 and 2010/11.

5. Historic Centenaries Working Group

The Chief Executive reminded the Panel that they had asked to be advised of upcoming issues of a potentially political nature. He circulated papers from the Historic Centenaries Working Group meeting which had been due to take place on 10th August. Panel members agreed to consider the papers.